



# What Can We Control

The impact on our jobs and daily life due to the drastic changes and the unknown are traveling faster than the coronavirus itself. One feels your heart beating faster as you open the latest communication from your airline or operator.

If your brain doesn't know what's around the corner, it can't keep you out of harm's way. When certainty is questioned, your stress response goes haywire.

## Focus on What you Can Control

- **Mindset** is the most powerful thing you can control. Notice as soon as you are having unhelpful thoughts of calamity. Focus for 15-20 seconds on what you do have control over and what opportunities are available to you. This will help your brain to rewire and become more constructive. Engage in activities (e.g. hobbies, an online course, admin etc.) to move away from getting stuck in negative thoughts.
- **Take the time/opportunity** to do what you often can't do when away from home regularly.
- **Children:** Stick to regular routines. The predictability of routine and also not easing up on discipline, can help children feel safe. You can create a schedule for learning and fun activities when schools are closed.
- **Relationships:** Listen. Express. Support. The different routine accompanied with the uncertainty can put strain on your relationships with those closest to you. Listen to one another and acknowledge how each one deals with and is affected by what is happening. Allow yourself to receive support from your partner and don't try to carry everything by yourself.
- **Connect and express emotions** to those you feel safe with amidst the physical isolation.
- **Allow your emotions.** It takes more energy to try and hide our feelings. If we try to ignore what we are feeling, it can result in outbursts, depressive symptoms and also disrupt our sleep. Rather than seeing emotions as good or bad, try to see them as messengers of your needs and your situation at the moment. Ask yourself what am I feeling, why do I feel like that and how do I choose to respond.
- **Exercise.** It stimulates the production of chemicals in the brain that are the body's natural painkillers and mood elevators.
- **Sleep! Sleep! Sleep!** Healthy sleeping patterns are always crucial for aviators. Keep a note pad next to your bed and write down worrying thoughts or ideas if anxious thoughts wake you up at night.
- **Avoid unhelpful social media** and be assertive in halting negative conversations.



*MAYDAY-SA is a peer-to-peer support programme managed and resourced by aviators trained as peer support/debriefers. MAYDAY-SA also has partnerships with a network of medical professionals that understand the nature of the aviation industry that can provide additional assistance should you ever be in need of professional support.*

**We have a hotline: 012 333 6000 - ask for 'Mayday' and we will call you or email us: [support@mayday-sa.org.za](mailto:support@mayday-sa.org.za)**

## Other resources available to you for counselling and support:

- Your Company employee wellness service provider
- Life Line: Free 24-hour confidential telephone counselling for crisis intervention: 0861-322-322 [www.lifeline.co.za](http://www.lifeline.co.za)
- SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group): Provides free telephonic counselling, information, referrals and resources 24 hours a day. 0800 21 22 23, 0800 70 80 90 or 0800 456 789. Suicide Helpline: 0800 567 567 [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)
- FAMSA (Families South Africa) for Couple and Family related counselling: 011 975 7106/7 [www.famsa.org.za](http://www.famsa.org.za)
- SANCA (SA National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence): 011 892 3829 or 076 5351701 (whatsapp) [www.sancanational.info](http://www.sancanational.info)
- AA (Alcoholics Anonymous): National helpline: 0861 HELPAA (435 722) [www.aasouthafrica.org.za](http://www.aasouthafrica.org.za)
- NA (Narcotics Anonymous): National 24-hour helpline: 083 900 MY NA (083 900 69 62)

**YOUR FELLOW MAYDAY-SA AVIATORS ARE IN THIS TOGETHER WITH YOU.  
REACH OUT FROM ISOLATING YOURSELF AND ALLOW US TO SUPPORT YOU.**